

MARVEL

#21

**SPENCER
ACUÑA
ROSENBERG**

Sam★Wilson

Captain America



acuna16



BREAKING NEWS

VIGILANTE AND ACTIVIST RAGE BEATEN INTO A COMA WHILE IN CUSTODY FOR BURGLARY

NEWS: Activist petition to reassess Sam Wilson tape allegedly proving Rage's innocence surpasses 30,000 signatures as th

5:36 PM EST

LIVE
SHN

●●●○ Speed Walk 5:36 PM 21%



SAM WILSON @CAPTAINAMERICASW
After Steve Rogers was drained of his Super-Soldier serum, he passed his shield to me, Sam Wilson, A.K.A. The Falcon. Now that he's back in action, we both fight the good fight as Captain America.

**NEW YORK BULLETIN**

The NY Bulletin @NewYorkBu...
RAGE TRIAL: Rage in critical condition after prison beating, believed to be retaliation by inmates for his actions as a super hero.

8m

**NEW YORK BULLETIN**

The NY Bulletin @NewYorkBu...
RAGE TRIAL: Outspoken Rage supporter @CAPTAINAMERICASW was seen visiting Rage's hospital room but has yet to issue a statement.

20m



Harry Hauser @RadioAmer...
Violence happens in jail all the time. Don't want to get beaten up? Then don't rob a pawn shop owned by hard-working Americans!

26m



The FALCON!!! @JoaquinTo...
You've all seen the footage. You know Rage was there to stop robbers, not rob the place himself. I don't know what else to say.

39m



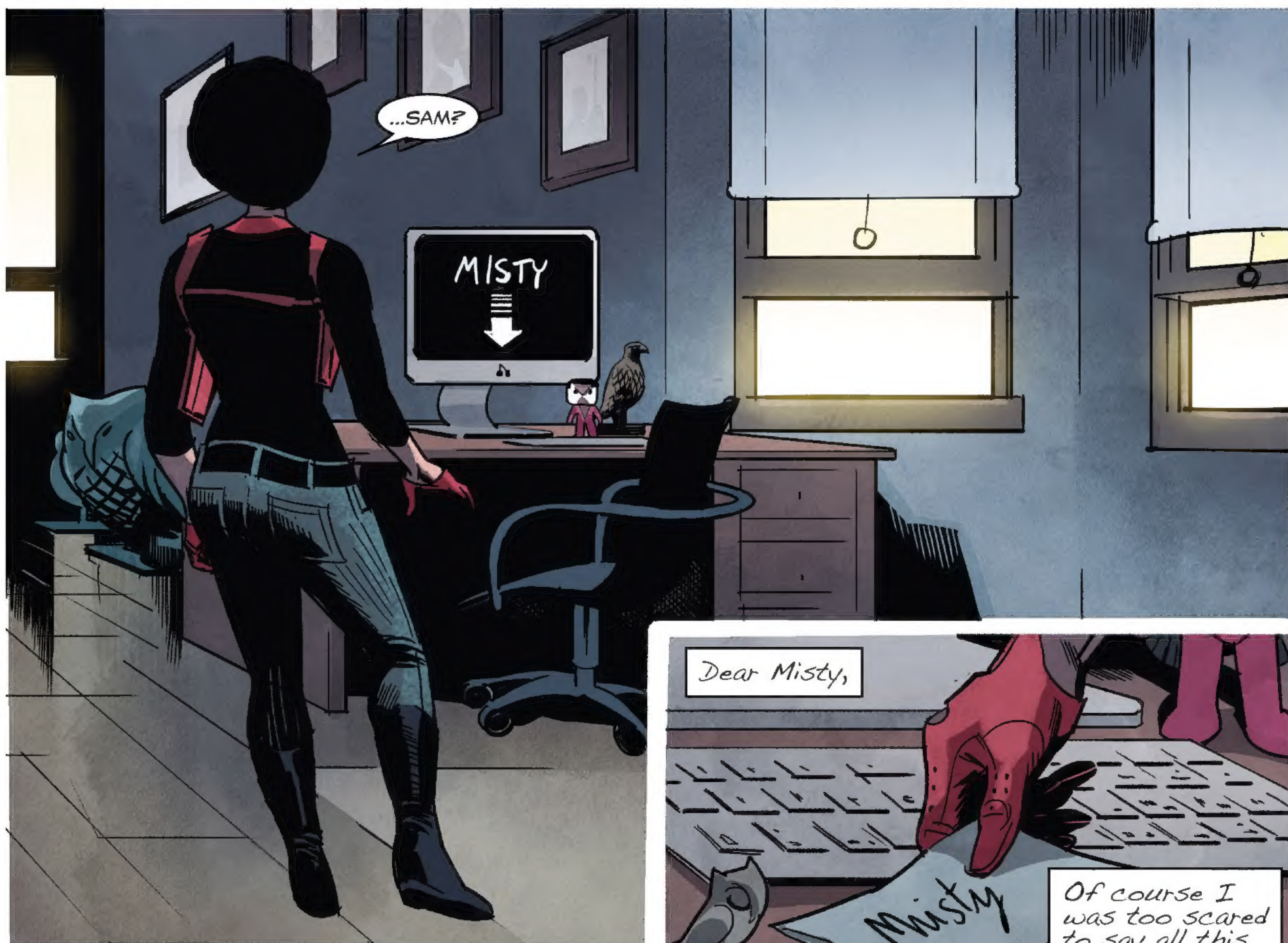
GALACTUS WAS RIGHT @REDWHITEA...
Some people can't handle JUSTICE, including that whiner, @CAPTAINAMERICASW. We need a REAL Cap to represent us. #TAKEBACKTHESHIELD!

50m

●●●○ Speed Walk 5:36 PM 21%



WRITER: NICK SPENCER
ARTIST: DANIEL ACUÑA
COLOR ARTIST: RACHELLE ROSENBERG
LETTERER: VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA
COVER: DANIEL ACUÑA
VARIANT COVER: R.B. SILVA & MARTE GRACIA
ASSISTANT EDITOR: ALANNA SMITH
EDITOR: TOM BREVOORT
EDITOR IN CHIEF: AXEL ALONSO
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER: JOE QUESADA
PRESIDENT: DAN BUCKLEY
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: ALAN FINE
CAPTAIN AMERICA CREATED BY JOE SIMON & JACK KIRBY





...this has been a long time coming, after all.

I still remember sitting in a pew, listening to Dad preach the word--telling us to go out and help minister to those who were lost.



I tried to live my life by those sermons. Social work, community organizing.

I'll be honest--I miss those days. Getting people clean, off the streets--I felt like I was making a difference.



Even found some time to care for some of God's other creatures.

And that was the part that set me down a weird path--



--one that ended with me fighting side by side with Captain America.

That was pretty damn cool.

Liked it so much I made
a habit out of it, in fact.

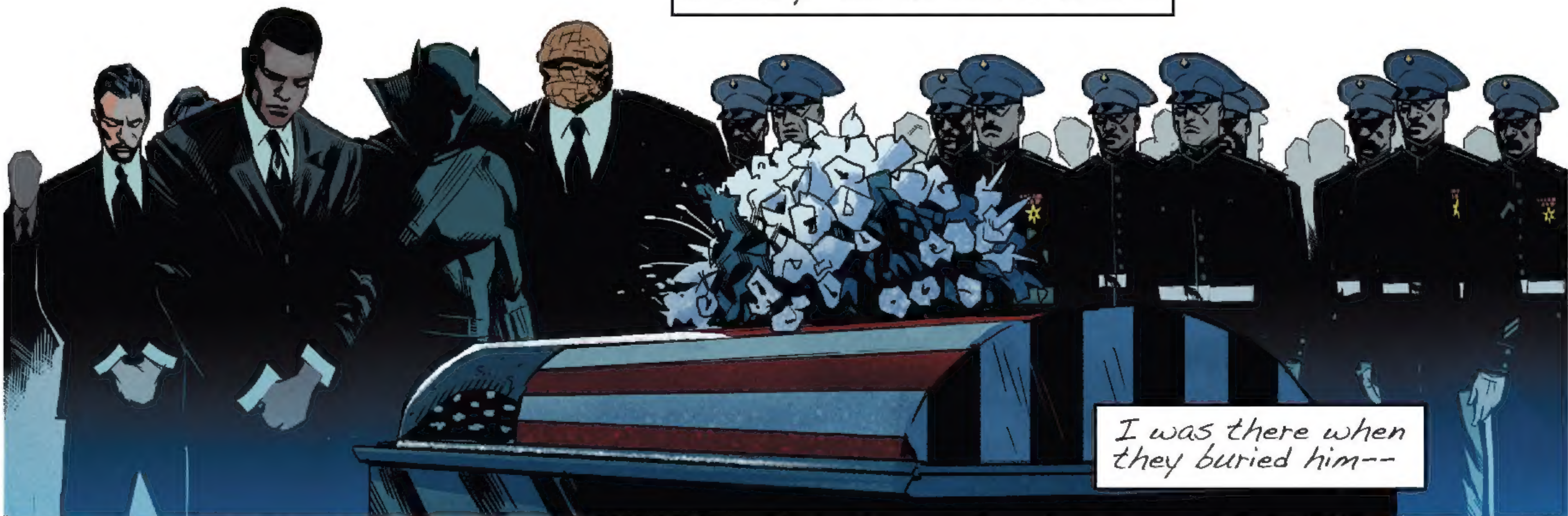
Lotta people
treated me
like a sidekick--
for all the
obvious reasons.

Steve never did,
though. Sure,
the guy could be
old-fashioned--
but when it came
to regarding me
as an equal--

--he was
way ahead
of folks
half his age.



I was proud to be his friend.



I was there when
they buried him--

--and I was
there when he
rose back up.

We haven't always
seen eye to eye, but
when the chips are
down--





--there's nobody I trust more.

I'M TELLING YOU, HARRY-- THAT SON OF A BITCH SET US UP!



PAUL, COME NOW...YOU REALLY THINK **CAPTAIN AMERICA--STEVE ROGERS**, THE REAL CAPTAIN AMERICA-- IS OUT TO GET YOU?

OUT TO GET **US**. HOW ELSE DO YOU EXPLAIN IT?!



"HE **NEEDED US--ME** FOR MY AMERICOPS INITIATIVE, YOU FOR YOUR TV SHOW, TOM FOR HIS SENATE SEAT--



"--AND **U.S. AGENT** TO DO HIS DIRTY WORK FOR HIM.



"BUT THEN THE PLAN CAME UP SHORT--AND EVER SINCE, IT SURE LOOKS LIKE HE'S TAKING CARE OF LOOSE ENDS. JOHN WALKER GOES MISSING IN ACTION A WEEK LATER--



"--AND THEN TOM HERALD IS KILLED BY FLAG-SMASHER-- WITH ROGERS **RIGHT THERE IN THE DAMN ROOM!**"



HE'S NOT GONNA RISK ANYONE FINDING OUT **HE** WAS THE ONE TRYING TO TAKE SAM WILSON DOWN--SO HE'S GONNA BE COMING FOR **US** NEXT.

WELL, MR. KEANE--



--I WISH
IT WAS THAT
SIMPLE.

C-CAPTAIN
AMERICA!



YOU SEE, THE
TRUTH IS--I WANTED
TO BELIEVE I MIGHT
HAVE A GREATER
USE FOR YOU.

THIS
AMERICOPS
PROGRAM YOU
STARTED--IT
IMPRESSED ME.
BRINGING SOME LAW
AND ORDER TO OUR
STREETS, DOING WHAT
WAS NECESSARY
TO CLEAN UP
THESE NEIGHBOR-
HOODS.

AND I WAS
INSPIRED THAT
A MAN OF YOUR
MANY BUSINESS
ACHIEVEMENTS
WOULD DEVOTE
HIMSELF TO A
CAUSE SO
SELFLESS.



BUT THEN--
IT **WASN'T**
SELFLESS,
WAS IT?

S-SORRY?

YOU'VE BUILT
QUITE AN EMPIRE
HERE, MR. KEANE. SO
MANY CORPORATIONS AND
ENDEAVORS WITH YOUR
NAME ON THEM. BUT ONE
REALLY STUCK OUT TO
ME, ALTHOUGH I DON'T
THINK YOU INTENDED
FOR IT TO.



**PARAGON
PROPERTIES--**
A REAL ESTATE
HOLDING FIRM THAT YOU'RE
LISTED AS THE PRESIDENT
OF--HAS BEEN GRABBING
UP VACANT PROPERTIES
IN DISTRESSED AREAS
AT A VERY
FAST RATE--

--AREAS
THAT SOON
SEE THE
AMERICOPS ON
PATROL.



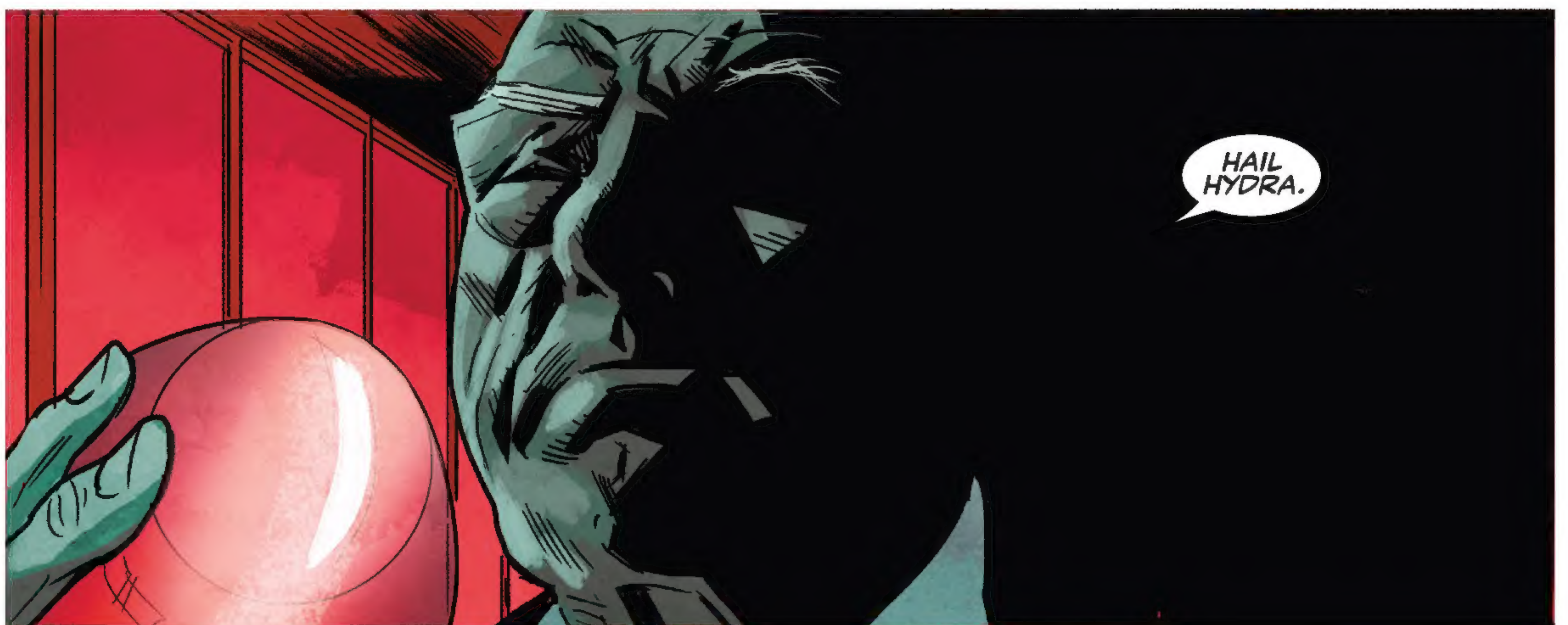
NOT A BAD PLAN,
REALLY--BUY UP BUILDINGS,
SEND IN THE AMERICOPS TO
BRING UP THE VALUES, EVEN
IF IT MEANS HARASSING THE
PEOPLE WHO ALREADY
LIVE THERE INTO
LEAVING...

BEFORE YOU
KNOW IT, YOU HAVE A
GENTRIFIED DISTRICT AND
A VERY TIDY PROFIT
MARGIN.



UNFORTUNATELY,
IT'S NOT HOW
I LIKE TO DO
BUSINESS.

BUT,
CAPTAIN--
WAIT--I CAN
EXP--





When Steve asked me to take the shield and carry on in his place, it was the greatest honor of my life.



I tried to follow in his footsteps, do the job in a way that would make him proud.



But it started to feel like something was missing.

Like I wasn't doing what Dad preached anymore. What about the people in the communities? What about the ones who were hurting?



So I decided to try something different.

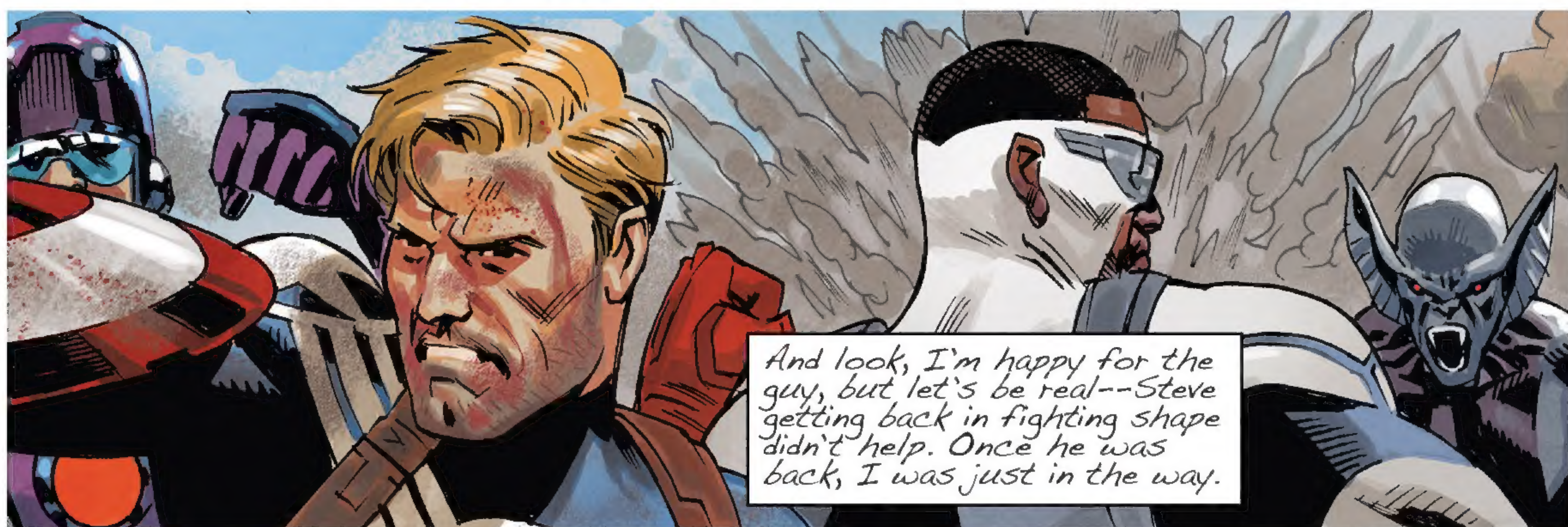
Tried to use the costume to start a conversation, to try to change people's minds and break down some of these divisions.



It was a disaster.

I will be the first to admit, I underestimated the depth of the anger out there.

How many people would refuse to even hear what I had to say--because of who I am and where I'm from. And yes, because of the color of my skin.



And look, I'm happy for the guy, but let's be real--Steve getting back in fighting shape didn't help. Once he was back, I was just in the way.



From there, everything felt like a battle.

I've had my back up against a wall for so long, I don't remember it any other way.



I keep fighting, keep getting knocked down--



--starting to wonder if I'll get back up this time.

I APPRECIATE YOU COMING DOWN HERE, DENNIS.

UNREST HIT THIS PLACE PRETTY HARD.

HEY, HOWEVER I CAN HELP, BROTHER GIDEON--EVEN IF IT IS JUST-- UNFF--



--HEAVY LIFTING.



MAN, I MISS BEING ABLE TO DO STUFF LIKE THAT SOMETIMES. BEEN A WHILE SINCE I HAD THE GAMMA RADIATION COURSEING THROUGH THESE VEINS--

AW, YOU DO SOME PRETTY GOOD WORK NOWADAYS THOUGH, REV. WILSON.

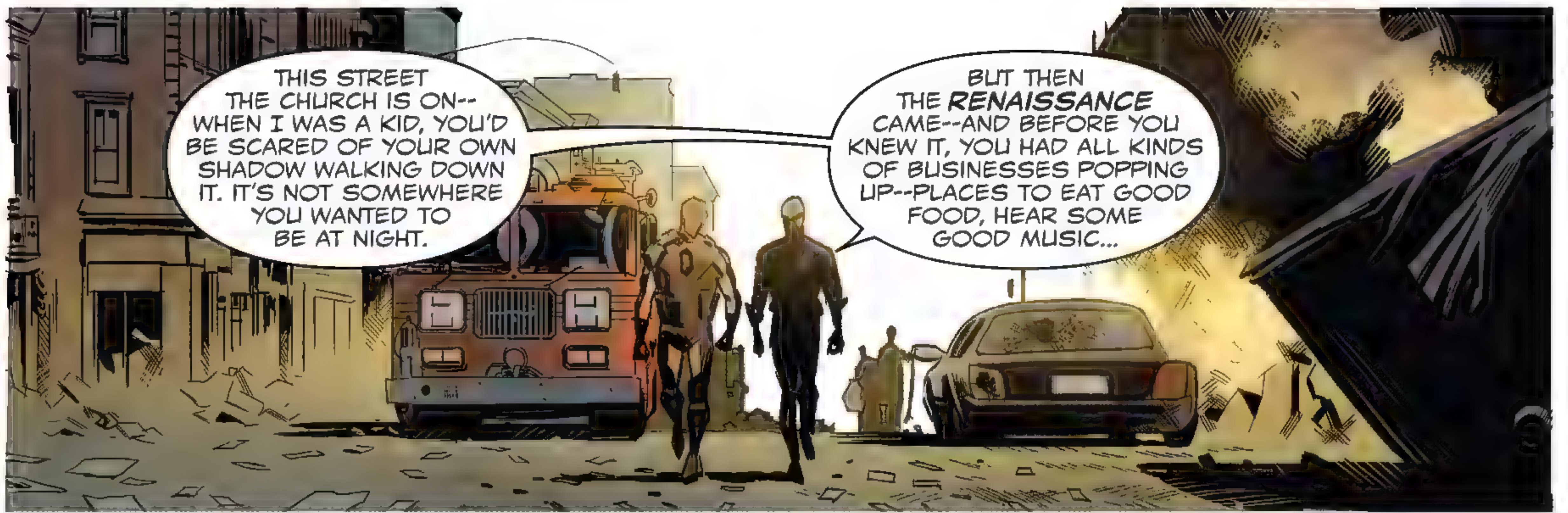


HH. I APPRECIATE THAT. BUT THESE DAYS--



LENOX CLEANERS

--I'M NOT SO SURE.



THIS STREET
THE CHURCH IS ON--
WHEN I WAS A KID, YOU'D
BE SCARED OF YOUR OWN
SHADOW WALKING DOWN
IT. IT'S NOT SOMEWHERE
YOU WANTED TO
BE AT NIGHT.

BUT THEN
THE **RENAISSANCE**
CAME--AND BEFORE YOU
KNEW IT, YOU HAD ALL KINDS
OF BUSINESSES POPPING
UP--PLACES TO EAT GOOD
FOOD, HEAR SOME
GOOD MUSIC...



YOU START TO LOOK
AROUND YOU AND FEEL LIKE
THINGS CAN'T GO WRONG
AGAIN. LIKE YOU CAN REST
EASY BECAUSE THINGS
ARE HERE TO STAY.

BUT
NOTHING
REALLY IS,
IS IT? AND
THIS PAST
WEEK--



--THIS
PAST WEEK I
FELT THAT FEAR
AGAIN.



SO
WHAT DO
WE DO NOW,
REV?

WE
REBUILD,
D.



WE
MAKE IT
STRONGER
THAN IT
WAS.



What's carried me through are the friendships. Family.



The people I love--

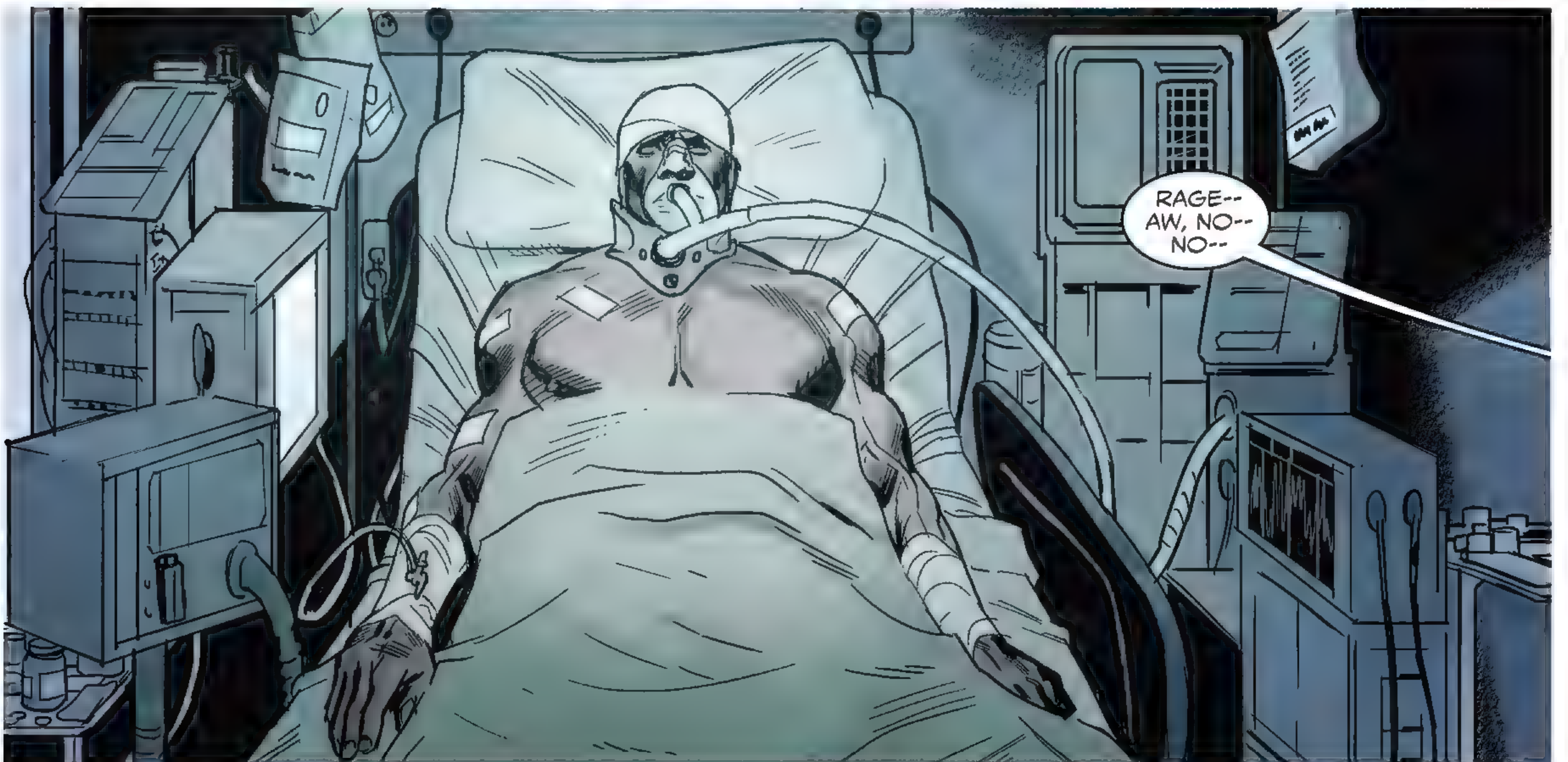
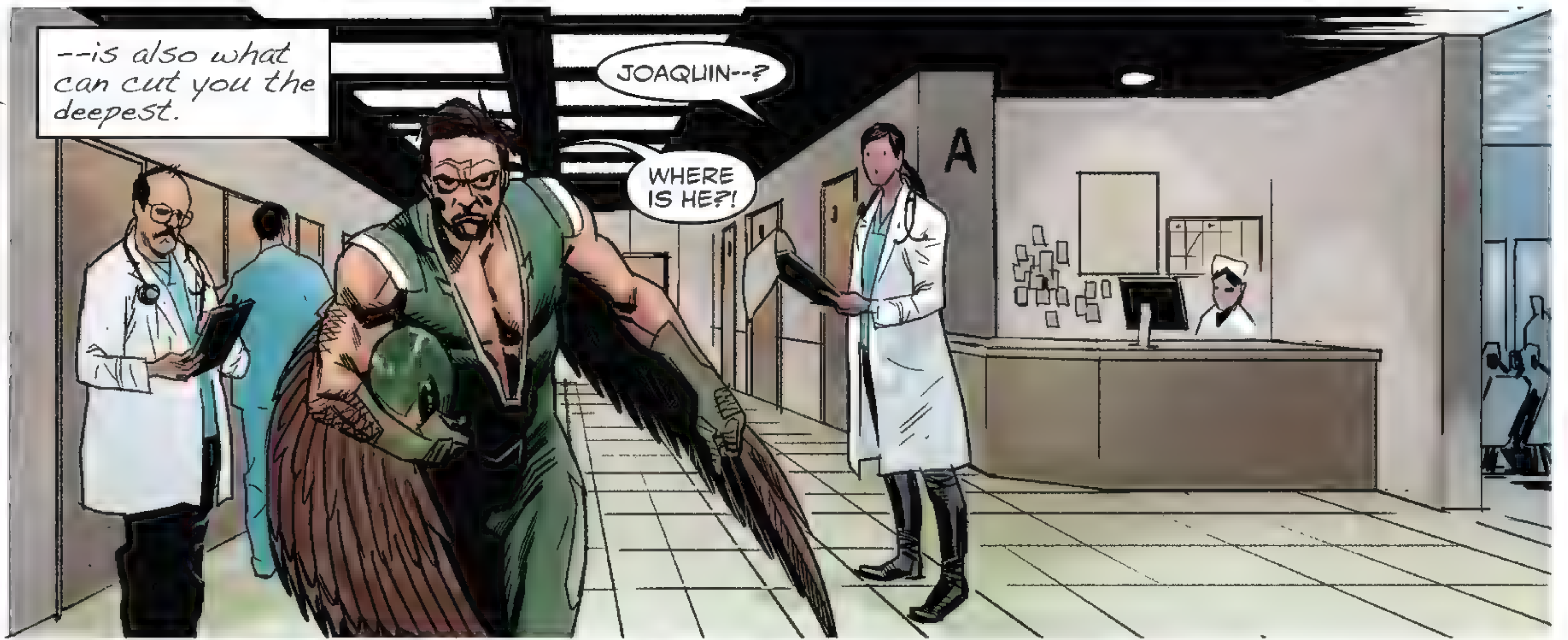


--and the people I've grown to count on.



But then, that's the trick, right?

What helps you the most--





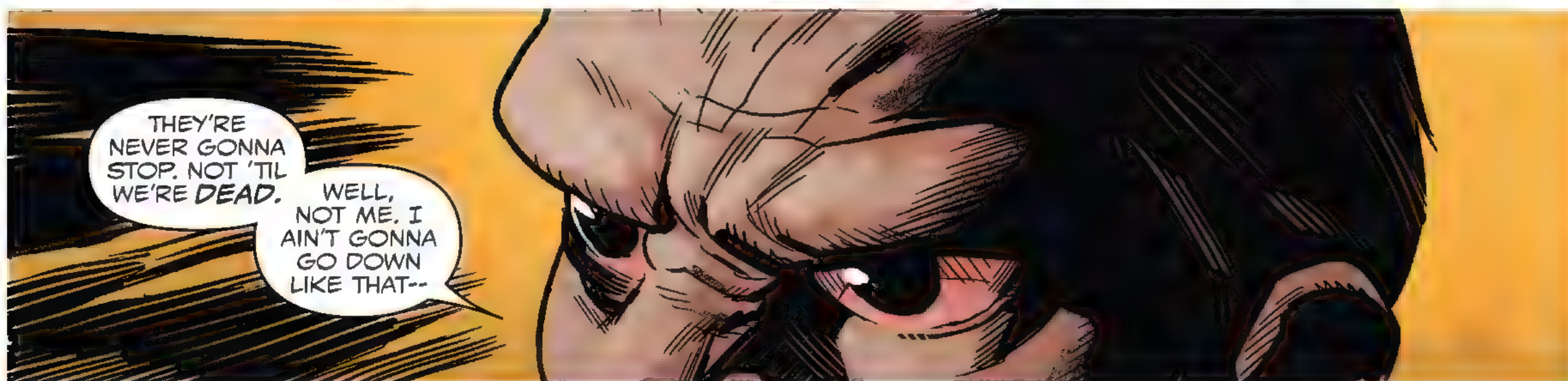
WE WERE
GONNA BE A TEAM--
A **DUO!** YOU KNOW,
LIKE POWER MAN
AND IRON FIST!

'CEPT I
WAS GONNA BE
WAY COOLER THAN
THAT WHITE GUY
WITH THE WEIRD
SHOES.



I CAN'T
BELIEVE THIS!
WHY HAS IT
ALWAYS GOTTA
BE LIKE
THIS?!

EVERY TIME
I START TO
THINK THINGS ARE
GONNA BE
BETTER...



THEY'RE
NEVER GONNA
STOP. NOT 'TIL
WE'RE **DEAD.**

WELL,
NOT ME. I
AIN'T GONNA
GO DOWN
LIKE THAT--



JOAQUIN!

--THE
FALCON AIN'T
GONNA GO
DOWN WITHOUT
A **FIGHT!**

And that's why all this has to end.

I keep replaying everything that's gone down these last few weeks, and I can't escape the truth.



I could've done more.

Maybe it was all that outrage at the start. Maybe it was Steve coming back.

Whatever it was, I started watching my step too much--



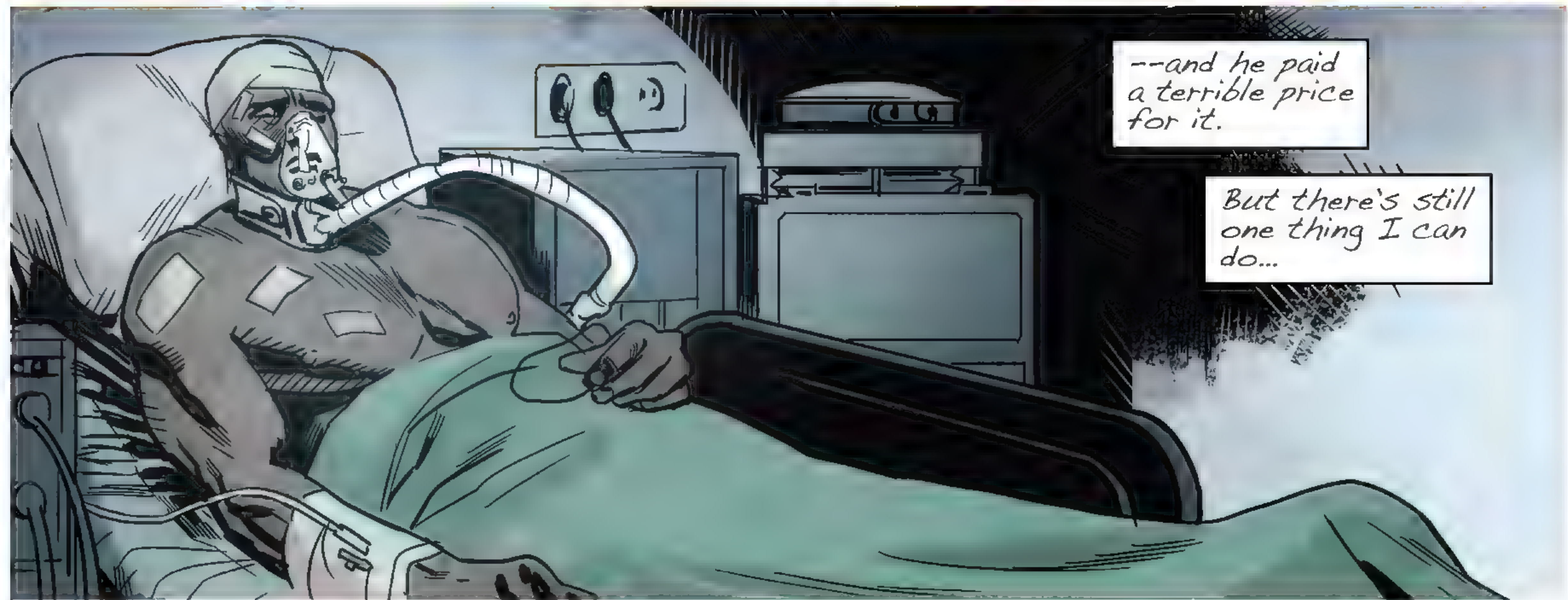
--started trying to prove them wrong, maybe? Who knows.

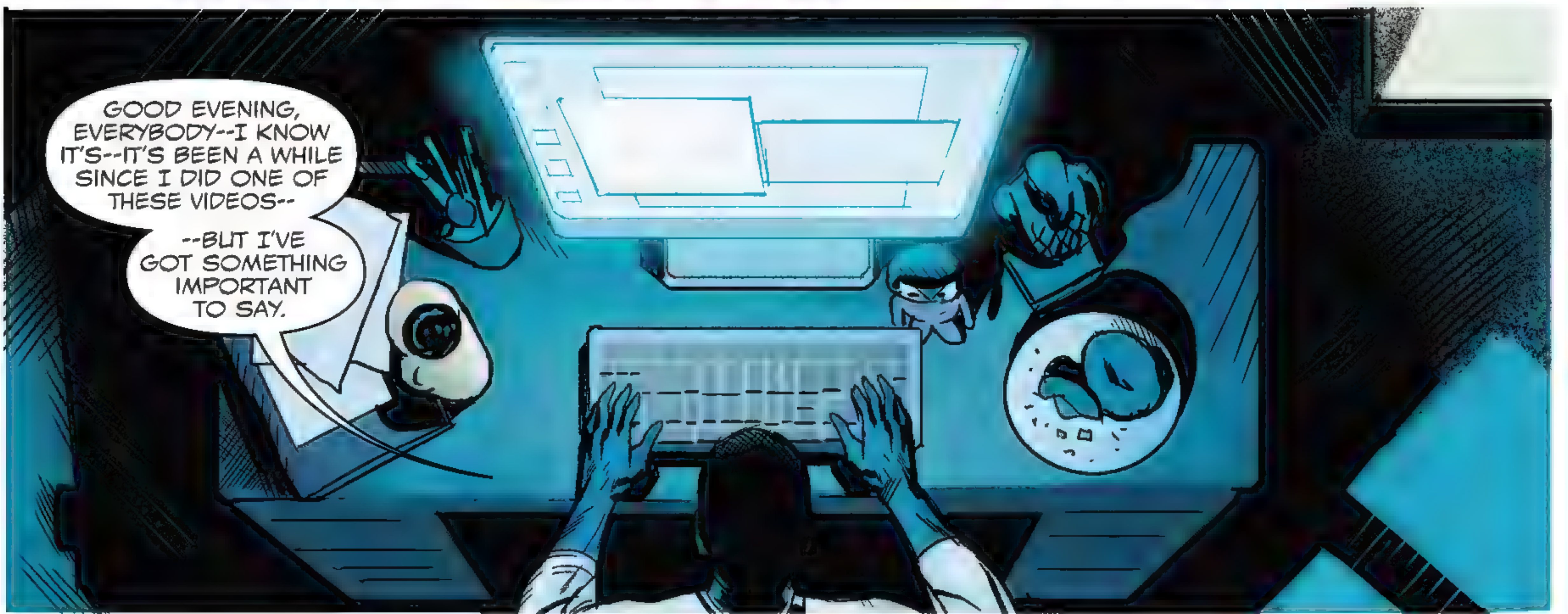
At any rate, I let Elvin down--

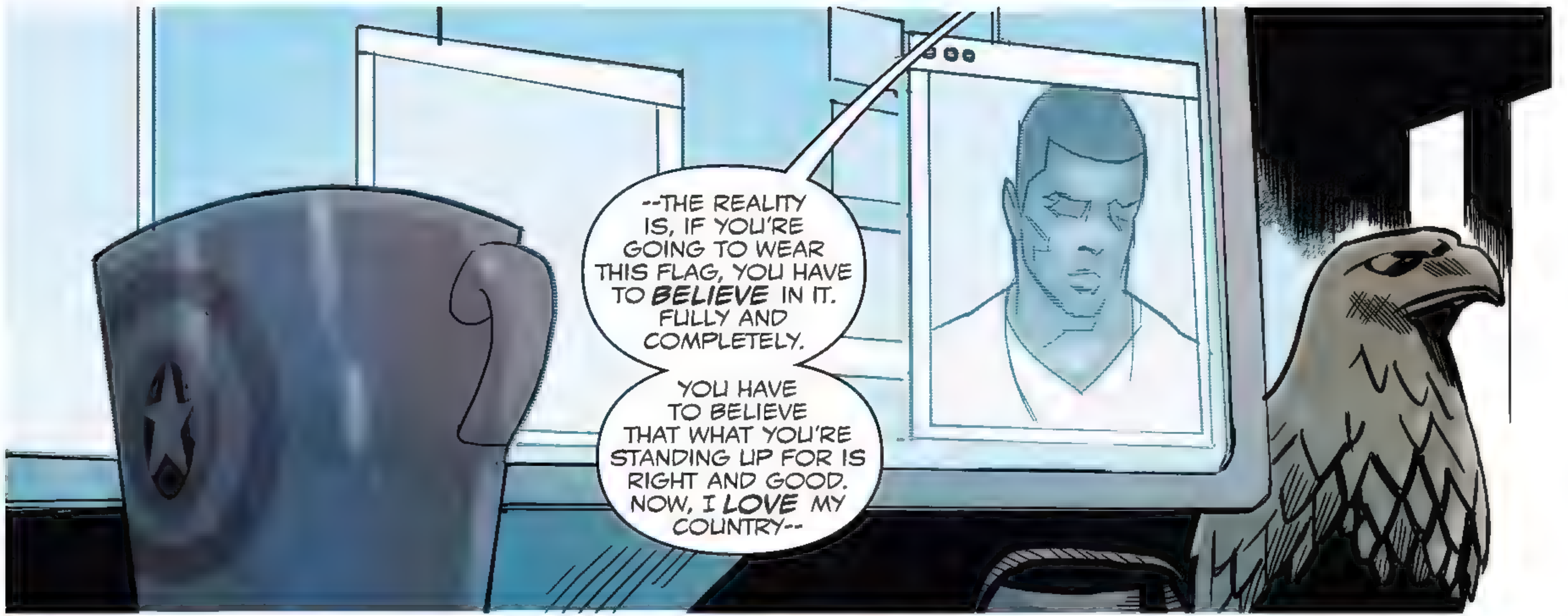


--and he paid a terrible price for it.

But there's still one thing I can do...







--THE REALITY IS, IF YOU'RE GOING TO WEAR THIS FLAG, YOU HAVE TO **BELIEVE** IN IT. FULLY AND COMPLETELY.

YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE THAT WHAT YOU'RE STANDING UP FOR IS RIGHT AND GOOD. NOW, I LOVE MY COUNTRY--



--BUT I CAN'T ENDORSE WHAT I'M SEEING RIGHT NOW.

WHEN A YOUNG BLACK HERO LIES IN A HOSPITAL BED, GRAVELY INJURED, BECAUSE OF A SYSTEM THAT NEVER PRACTICES THE FAIRNESS IT CLAIMS. WHEN PEOPLE ARE TARGETED AND HARASSED AND ATTACKED BY THESE AMERICOPS--

--WHEN PEOPLE ARE DYING IN OUR STREETS.



I KNOW CHANGE HAS TO HAPPEN.

PROBLEM IS, I DON'T BELIEVE I CAN MAKE THAT CHANGE IN THIS ROLE ANY LONGER. SO I PLAN TO STEP ASIDE AS CAPTAIN AMERICA--

--AND GIVE THE SHIELD BACK TO THE MAN IT BELONGS TO: STEVE ROGERS.



NOW, SOME OF YOU SAY THIS IS SOMEHOW DISHONORABLE OR UNPATRIOTIC. I'D REMIND YOU THAT STEVE HIMSELF HAS DECIDED, ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION, TO TAKE OFF THIS COSTUME AS A PROTEST AGAINST THINGS HE BELIEVED WERE WRONG.

I'M JUST FOLLOWING THAT EXAMPLE-- AND I HOPE HE UNDERSTANDS THAT, TOO.



OTHERS WILL CALL THIS GIVING UP. THEY'LL SAY LETTING THIS ROLE GO MEANS I'M QUITTING THE FIGHT.

I CAN ONLY DO WHAT I KNOW IS BEST IN MY HEART.



BUT I DO
WANT TO SAY
SOMETHING TO ALL
THE YOUNG PEOPLE
WATCHING
THIS--

DON'T
LOSE
HOPE.



THERE CAN BE SO MUCH BAD NEWS
OUT THERE--WE CAN GET CAUGHT UP IN
EVERYTHING THAT'S NOT GOING OUR
WAY--AND THERE'S A LOT OF THAT
RIGHT NOW, I'LL ADMIT.

IT'S EASY
TO START FEELING
OUTNUMBERED AND
ALONE, TO LET IT
BREAK YOU.



BUT WHEN YOU START TO SENSE THAT FEELING
COMING ON, I WANT YOU TO REMEMBER EVERY-
THING WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED TOGETHER,
THE FIGHTS WE DID WIN.

AND I WANT
YOU TO KNOW THAT
I WILL BE RIGHT THERE
BEHIND YOU, HELPING
YOU WIN THE
NEXT ONE.



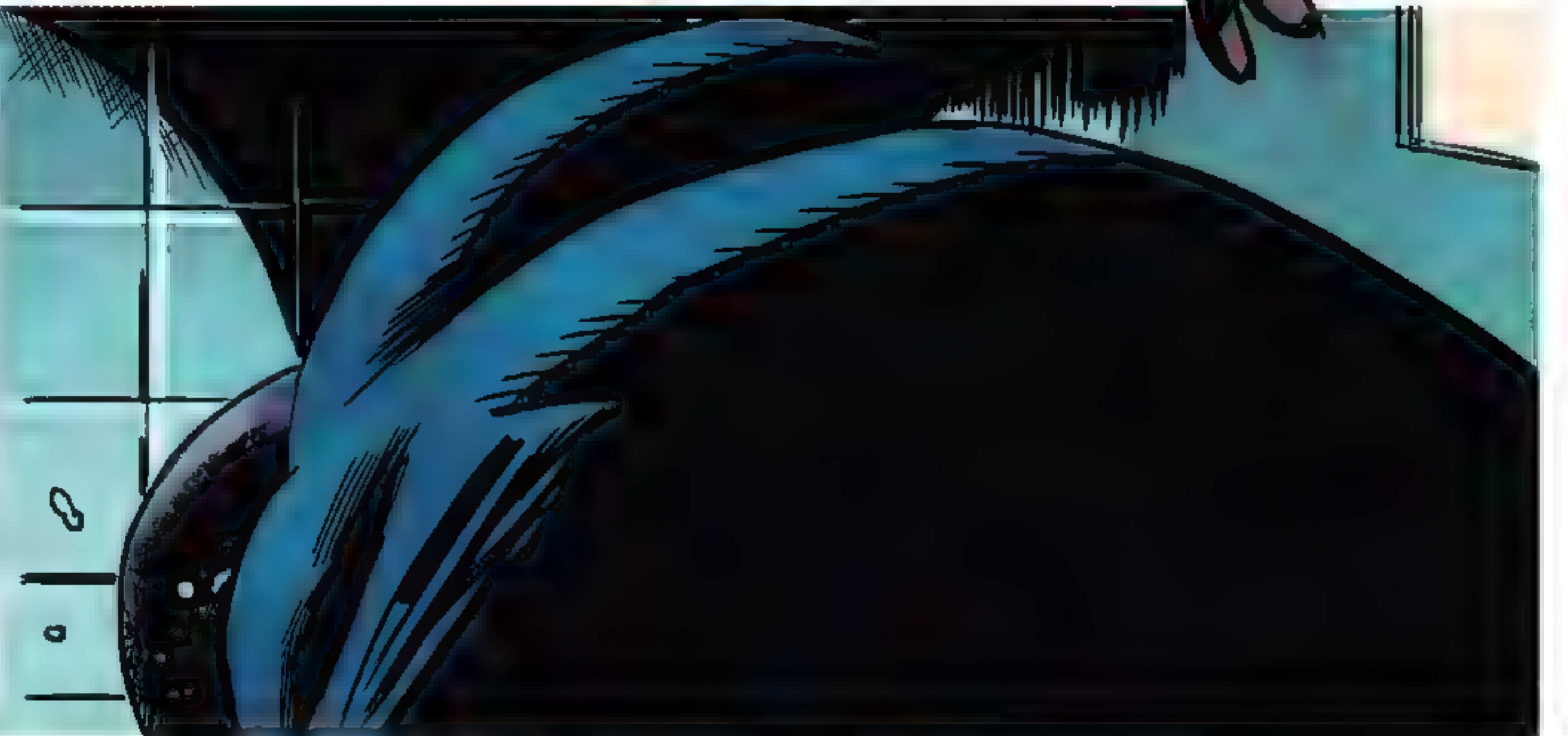
SO DON'T BE DISCOURAGED. STAND
UP. DON'T BE DEFEATED. DO WHAT'S
RIGHT. DON'T BE SCARED.
BE BRAVE.

I NEED YOU
TO BE THAT. THIS
COUNTRY AND THIS
WORLD NEED YOU TO
BE THAT. NOW MORE
THAN EVER.



THIS
HAS BEEN
THE GREATEST
HONOR OF
MY LIFE--

--AND I
PRAY I WAS, IN
SOME SMALL WAY
AT LEAST, ABLE TO
INSPIRE WHOEVER
COMES NEXT.





So, yeah, I imagine
you might not
approve of all this--

--but it's something I
need to do for myself.

This is a stand
I need to take.



This time, no
compromises.

If Steve's Captain
America is a symbol
of a great country
pushing forward--



SAM!

--then let Sam Wilson's
Captain America have been
a reminder of the people
it's leaving behind.

This is my
protest...



*This is my
goodbye.*



NEXT

WORLD

POLITICS

ENTERTAINMENT

SPORTS

T

VIDEOS

PHOTOS

SOCIAL MEDIA

COMICS

GAMES

Search NEXT



THE SECRET EMPIRE RISES

8,165 COMMENTS | 70,777 ❤️



TO

WH
HOW



